

Tracts

1609/1712.

TO

*The Right Honourable and the Honourable
Knights, Citizens and Burgeses in Par-
liament assembled.*

THE

HUMBLE PETITION

Of the SEAMEN and MARINES on
Board His Majesty's Ships, in behalf
of themselves,

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

THAT your Petitioners relying on the
Candour and Justice of your Honourable House,
make bold to lay their Grievances before you, hop-
ing, that when you reflect on them, you will please
to give Redress, as far as your Wisdom shall deem
necessary.

We beg Leave to remind your august Assembly,
that the Act of Parliament passed in the Reign of

King Charles II. wherein the Wages of all Seamen serving on Board His Majesty's Fleet was settled passed at a Time when the Necessaries of Life and Slops of every Denomination was at least 30 per Cent. cheaper than at the present Time; which enabled Seamen and Marines to provide better for their Families, than we can now do with one Half Advance.

We therefore request your Honourable House, will be so kind as to Revise the Act beforementioned, and make such Amendments therein, as will enable your Petitioners and their Families to live in the same comfortable Manner as Seamen and Mariners did at that Time.

Your Petitioners with all humility, laid their Grievances before the Honourable *Earl Howe*, and flattered ourselves with the hopes, that his Lordship would have been an Advocate for us, as we have been repeatedly under his Command, and made the British Flag ride triumphantly over that of our Enemies. But to our great Surprise, we find ourselves unprotected by him, who has seen so many Instances of our Intrepidity, in carrying the British Flag into every Part of the Seas with Victory and Success.

We profess ourselves as loyal to our Sovereign and zealous in the Defence of our Country as the Army or Militia can be, and esteem ourselves equally entitled to His Majesty's Munificence, therefore with Jealousy we behold their Pay augmented, and their Out-Pensions of Chelsea College encreased to Thirteen Pounds per Annum. while we remain neglected, and the Out-Pensioners of Greenwich have only Seven Pounds per Annum.

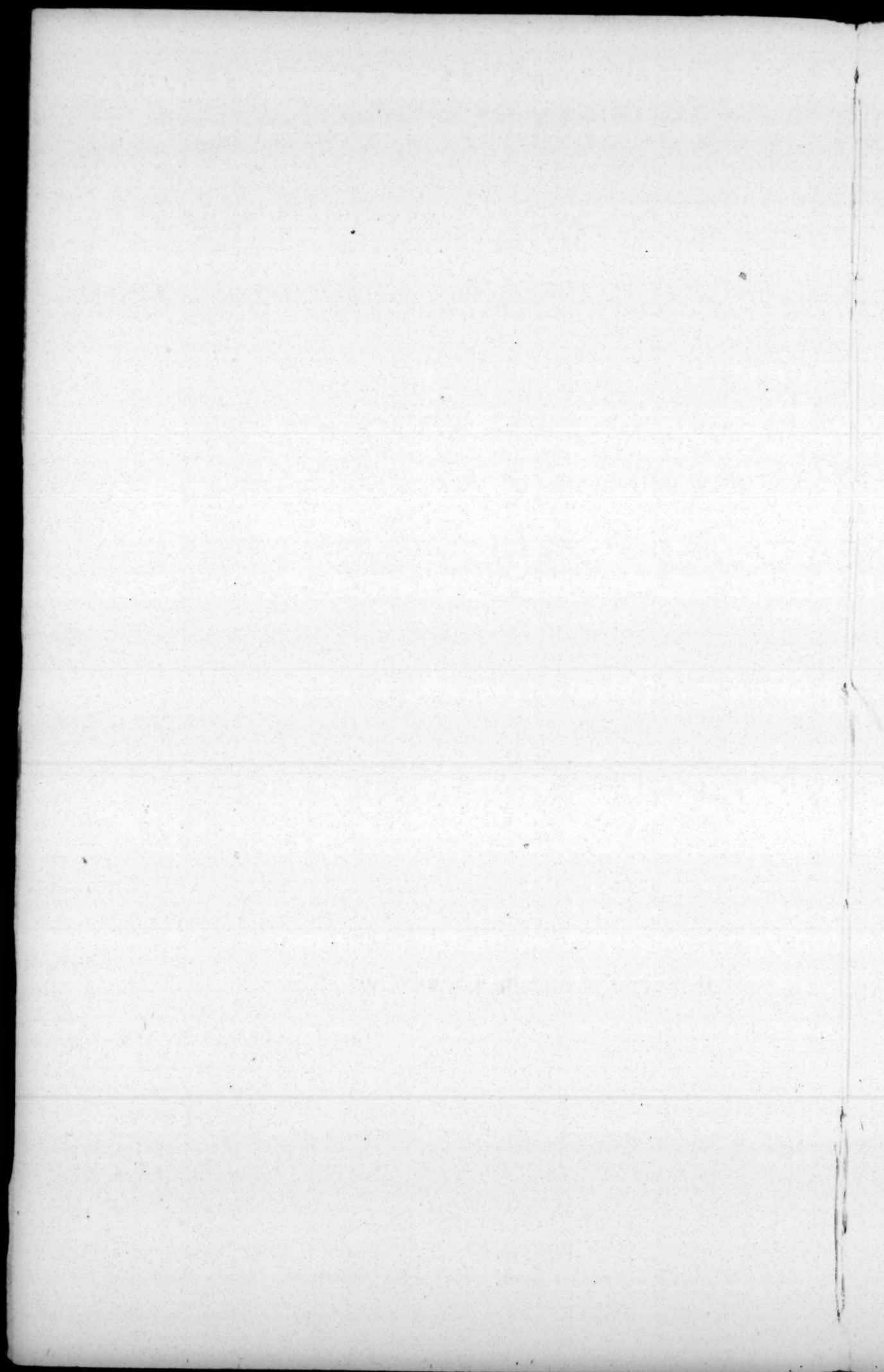
We your Petitioners therefore humbly Implore that you will take these Matters into Consideration,



and with your accustomed Goodness and Liberality, comply with the Prayer of this Petition,—and your Petitioners as in Duty Bound will ever Pray, &c.

We, the Delegates of the Fleet, hereunto sign our Names for the Ships Companies :

<i>Royal George</i> -----	Valentine Joyce John Morris
<i>Queen Charlotte</i> ---	Patrick Glynn John Udleson
<i>Royal Sovereign</i> ---	Joseph Green John Richardson
<i>London</i> -----	Alexander Harding William Ruly
<i>Glory</i> -----	Patrick Dugan John Bethell
<i>Duke</i> -----	Michael Adams William Anderfon
<i>Mars</i> -----	Thomas Allen James Blithe
<i>Marlborough</i> ---	John Vassia William Senator
<i>Ramilies</i> -----	Charles Berry George Clear
<i>Robust</i> -----	David Wilson John Scrivener
<i>L'Impeiuex</i> -----	John Witna William Porter
<i>Defence</i> -----	George Galaway James Barerick
<i>Terrible</i> -----	Mark Turner George Salked
<i>La Pompee</i> -----	William Potts James Melvin
<i>Minotaur</i> -----	Dennis Lawley George Crofland
<i>Defiance</i> -----	John Saunders John Husband



TO

*The Right Honourable the Lords
Commissioners of the Admiralty.*

MY LORDS,

WE, the Seamen of His Majesty's Navy, take the Liberty of Addressing your Lordships, in an Humble Petition,—shewing the many Hardships and Oppressions we have laboured under for many Years, and which we hope your Lordships will Redress, as soon as possible, we flatter ourselves that your Lordships, together with the Nation in General, will acknowledge our Worth and good Services, both in the American War as well as the present ; for which good Service your Lordships Petitioners do unanimously agree in Opinion that their Worth to the Nation and laborious Industry in Defence of their Country, deserve some better Encouragement than that we meet with at Present ; or from any we have experienced. We, your Petitioners do not boast of our good Services for any other Purpose than that of putting you and the Nation in mind of the Respect due to us, nor do we ever intend to deviate from our former Character so far from any thing of that kind, or that an Englishman or Men should turn their Coats, we likewise agree in Opinion, that we should suffer double the Hardships we have hitherto experienced before we would suffer the Crown of England to be in the least imposed upon by that of any other Power in the World ; we

therefore beg Leave to inform your Lordships of the Grievances which we at present labour under.

We, your humble Petitioners relying, that your Lordships will take into early Consideration the Grievances of which we complain, and do not in the least doubt but your Lordships will comply with our Desires, which are every way reasonable.

The first Grievance which we have to complain of is, that our Wages are too low & ought to be raised, that we might, be the better able to support our Wives and Families in a Manner comfortable, and whom we are in duty bound to support as far as our Wages will allow, which we trust will be looked into by your Lordships and the Honorable House of Commons in Parliament assembled.

We, your Petitioners beg that your Lordships will take into consideration the Grievances of which we complain, and now lay before you,

First—That our Provisions be raised to the Weight of Sixteen Ounces to the Pound, and of a better Quality, and that our Measures may be the same as those used in the Commercial Trade of this Country.

Secondly—That your Petitioners request your Honours will be pleased to observe there should be no Flour served while we are in Harbour, in any Port whatever, under the Command of the British Flag; and also that there might be granted a sufficient Quantity of Vegetables of such kind as may be the most plentiful in the Ports to which we go; which we grievously complain and lay under the Want of.

Thirdly—That your Lordships will be pleased seriously to look into the State of the Sick on

Board His Majesty's Ships, that they may be better attended to, and that they may, have the use of such Necessaries as are allowed for them in time of their Sickness, and that these Necessaries be not on any account embezzled.

Fourthly—That your Lordships, will be so kind as to look into this Affair, which is no-wise unreasonable, and that we may be looked upon as a number of Men standing in Defence of our Country, and that we may in some wise have grant and opportunity to taste the Sweets of Liberty on Shore, when in any Harbour, and when we have completed the Duty of our Ship, after our return from Sea, and that no Man may incroach upon his Liberty, there shall be a Boundary limited, and those trespassing any further, without a written order from the Commanding Officer, shall be punished according to the Rules of the Navy, which is a natural Request and congenial to the heart of Man, and certainly to us, that you make the boast of being the Guardians of the Land.

Fifthly—That if any Man is wounded in Action, his Pay be continued until he is cured, and discharged; and if any Ship has any real Grievances to complain of, we hope your Lordships will readily Redress them, as far as is in your Power, to prevent any Disturbances.

It is also unanimously agreed by the Fleet, that from *this Day*, that no Grievances shall be received in order to convince the Nation at large, that we know when to cease to ask, as well as to begin, and that we ask nothing but what is Moderate, and may

be granted without detriment to the Nation, or Injury to the Service.

Given on Board the Queen Charlotte,
by the Delegates of the Fleet, this
18th Day of April, 1797.

<i>Royal George</i> -----	Valentine Joyce John Morris
<i>Queen Charlotte</i> ---	Patrick Glynn John Udleson
<i>Royal Sovereign</i> ---	Joseph Green John Richardson
<i>London</i> -----	Alexander Harding William Ruly
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